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ABSTRACT

This document is one in a series of monographs aimed at providing a narrative summary of ideas and thoughts gathered from particular community segments represented in a series of mini-conferences held to discuss the concept of collaboration in career education. In this monograph, the career education activities of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) are discussed. First, the FFA organization is described including its relationship to vocational agriculture instructional programs and to 4-H operations. Next the career education leadership efforts of the National FFA Center are reviewed. The career education responsibilities of vocational agriculture teachers are listed and several programs which help prepare vocational agriculture teachers to participate in career education are described. Finally, ways of re-establishing effective vocational education/career education relationships are suggested, based upon ideas expressed by participants in the mini-conferences. Appended are lists of mini-conference participants and of related issues and questions generated in the mini-conference. (The proceedings of each mini-conference are reported in detail in ERIC documents CE 020 110-111). (BM)

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MONOGRAPHS ON CAREER EDUCATION

FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA AND CAREER EDUCATION

by
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August 1978

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Preface

During the period covering November 1977 through May 1978, OE's Office of Career Education sponsored, through a contract with Inter-America Research Associates a series of mini-conferences devoted to the general topic of The Concept of Collaboration in Career Education. This monograph is one in a series of OCE monographs aimed at providing a narrative summary of ideas and thoughts gathered from particular community segments represented in this series of mini-conferences.

Participants in each mini-conference associated with a particular segment of the broader community were selected for OCE and Inter-America Research Associates by the organization itself. Lists of all participants whose thoughts are summarized in this monograph are presented as Appendix A of this monograph. It is important to recognize that, while participants are properly thought of as *representatives* from the particular community segment involved, they are, in no way, to be thought of as *representing* that community segment. That is, each participant was encouraged to speak only for herself/himself. No formal organizational or institutional commitment was sought nor should be inferred from the contents of this monograph.

In general, each mini-conference involved from 10-15 participants. Each lasted two days with the discussion sessions chaired by the Director, Office of Career Education, USOE. Participants in each mini-conference developed their own agenda through a process that asked them to list topics or issues they thought pertinent to discuss. Once such a list was developed, participants then picked those that appealed most to a majority of the participants for extended discussion. The list of issues and questions, themselves, provide a series of interesting insights into concerns of participants regarding their organizations and career education. A complete listing of the issues and concerns raised by participants in the mini-conference reported in this monograph appears as Appendix B. Readers are urged to study this list carefully.

Notes for each mini-conference were taken personally by the Director, Office of Career Education. Based on such notes, the series of monographs of which this is one, has been prepared. The

complete notes for each mini-conference have been compiled by Inter-America Research Associates and published as a separate document. Limited copies of this document are available, so long as the supply lasts, to those requesting them from OE's Office of Career Education.

No pretense is made that this monograph represents a comprehensive treatment of the topic. There is no way that, in only two days of discussion, a comprehensive coverage could have been accomplished by the small group of participants involved. This monograph is properly viewed as an attempt to report, as fully as possible, the discussions that took place. By and large, the contents of this monograph are limited to ideas and thoughts of the participants. At times, some of my own personal thoughts and opinions are interwoven into the discussion, but the natural temptation to do so has been resisted insofar as possible.

Primary expressions of thanks for this monograph must go to the participants themselves who donated two full days of their time, without an honorarium, to sharing their thoughts with me and, through this monograph, with you. In addition, special thanks and recognition must be expressed to Dr. William Mermis, Professor, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, who served as Consultant to Inter-America Research Associates and assisted me in the conduct of these mini-conferences. Finally, thanks are also due Dr. Brady Fletcher and Ms. Odie Esparza of Inter-America Research Associates for their expert logistical assistance.

Kenneth B. Hoyt, Director
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Introduction

The Future Farmers of America (FFA) is the oldest and largest in-school student organization associated with the vocational education movement. Among all such student organizations, it is the only one having a National Board of Directors chartered by the United States Congress. For both of these reasons, FFA was chosen as the single vocational education student organization to be represented in the 1977-78 series of Office of Career Education mini-conferences devoted to the general topic of "Collaboration in Career Education."

The contents of this monograph, while limited to a discussion of FFA AND CAREER EDUCATION, are organized in such a way as to hold potential for applicability to other vocational education student youth groups as well. The other organizations involved include: (a) Future Homemakers of America (FHA); (b) American Industrial Arts Student Association (AIASA); (c) Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA); (d) Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA); (e) Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA); (f) Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA); and (g) Office Education Clubs (OEA). These vocational education student youth groups share, with FFA, common commitments to: (1) helping youth develop leadership qualities; (2) promoting and developing good citizenship; (3) helping youth develop an understanding and appreciation of the American economic system; (4) helping youth explore careers related to the broad occupational area each represents; and (5) helping youth develop good work habits, sound work values, and other career adaptability skills that will enable them to change with change in the occupational society. Had time and financial resources been available, it would have been easy to justify holding a separate mini-conference and developing a separate monograph such as this one for each of these vocational education student organizations. Because this was not possible, every effort is made in this monograph to include reports of seminar participants that have applicability across all such organizations. It is hoped that, as readers study here the specific kinds of operations associated with FFA, they are motivated to discover analogous activities associated with FBLA, AIASA, FHA, DECA, HOSA, VICA, and OEA. Only if this is done can the full potential

of vocational education student youth clubs for contributing to the goals of career education be realized.

The contents of this monograph concentrate on reporting perceptions of participants regarding FFA as a student organization, the ways in which it is already contributing to career education, and recommendations of participants for even further expansion of FFA in the total career education effort. It is essential, at the outset, to point out that the FFA representatives attending the seminar on which this monograph is based were, without exception, very conversant with and dedicated to career education. No pretense is made here that their thoughts will be completely shared by others in FFA or with all of their counterparts in other vocational education student youth organizations.

The Nature of FFA

The FFA national headquarters is located at National FFA Center, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, Virginia. The property is part of the original estate of George Washington. Those who visit Mount Vernon when in the Washington, D.C., area are almost sure to pass it. Operating from the National FFA Center, this organization serves more than 510,000 FFA members through 8,800 FFA chapters in both secondary school and in postsecondary institutional settings. It operates with approximately $975,000 per year in contributions made to the National FFA Foundation primarily from the private business/industry community coupled with dues of $1.50 per year for each member. In each State, there is a State association and, at the local level, there are chapters in existence throughout the nation. The national convention, held each year in Kansas City, Missouri, is one of the largest of any youth organization. The 50th anniversary in 1978 was expected to see more than 23,000 members and their adult sponsors in attendance at the national convention.

The FFA is controlled and operated by a National Board of Directors whose members include both adults and youth who are members. Six persons on that board are officially present because of their appointments as FFA specialists in the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, U.S. Office of Education. This is made possible because, as noted earlier, FFA has a mandate from the United States Congress. The FFA, in cooperation with the FFA specialists in USOE, publishes an annual "Agricultural Proficiency Awards Reference," the basic handbook used as a basis

for the award program operated by them. This award program, to be described more fully later, is the centerpiece of the FFA and used as a prime motivational basis for achieving their objectives.

Membership in the FFA is open to all students between the ages of 14 to 21, and who are enrolled in a Vocational Agriculture state program, at the secondary or postsecondary level, which is an integral part of a formal vocational education curriculum. There is no requirement that a student enrolled in a vocational agriculture program belong to the FFA but, unless that student is so enrolled, he/she cannot belong to FFA. Nationwide, approximately 75 percent of all vocational agriculture students join FFA each year. Of these, approximately 23 percent participate in some kind of FFA competitive awards program beyond the local level.

There are four levels of membership in FFA: (a) "Green Hand"–typically 9th grade students in their first year of FFA; (b) "Chapter Degree"–typically held by students in their second year of FFA membership; (c) "State FFA Degree"–a level attained by approximately 2-3 percent of the FFA membership in each State based on the FFA contest system; and (d) "American Farmer Degree"–a level of membership reached by only 0.1 percent of the national FFA membership and limited to those who have competed successfully at the national level.

Like vocational agriculture itself, FFA activities are, in no way, limited simply to farming although, of course, many kinds of direct farm activities are included in the 22 "proficiency areas" for which contests are conducted. In addition to those "proficiency areas" directly concerned with various aspects of farming itself, some of the other "proficiency areas" include areas such as: (a) agricultural electrification; (b) agricultural mechanics; (c) agricultural sales and services; (d) fish and wildlife management; (e) floriculture; (f) forest management; (g) outdoor recreation; and (h) turf and landscape management. Because of this wide variety of kinds of agriculture-related types of activities, the membership is open to and enjoyed by students in urban and suburban settings as well as those who live in rural America.

FFA and the Teacher of Vocational Agriculture

To really understand the nature and operation of FFA, it is essential to recognize that it is seen as one of four major classes

of activity in which teachers of vocational agriculture engage at the secondary school level. In this context, FFA is seen as that portion of the teacher's job where primary emphasis is placed on leadership development for students of vocational agriculture. In this sense it is a school laboratory. In addition to FFA, the teacher of vocational agriculture is responsible for: (a) conducting day classes where students learn the cognitive content of vocational agriculture/agribusiness; (b) supervised occupational experiences (SOE) which is best thought of as a form of cooperative education and entreprenuership aimed at helping students apply their cognitive learning in some form of productive paid and/or unpaid work experience; and (c) the Adult Program which includes both the "young farmer" and the "adult farmer" programs conducted typically at night as part of adult education.

FFA activities, then, are seen as major instructional responsibilities of the teacher of vocational agriculture. Thus, where one of their local chapters exists, it is both organized and operated under the direction of the teacher of vocational agriculture as part of that person's total instructional responsibilities. Some of the chapter's contest activities are conducted during the school day, but a great number are conducted at nights and on weekends.

The prime differences between the SOE and the FFA experience for students of vocational agriculture are that: (a) All vocational agriculture students are required to participate in SOE but participate in FFA only if they choose to do so. Congress, under the new vocational education law, claims this must change to include 100 percent of the vocational agriculture students; (b) The SOE experience is conducted, typically on an individual project/program basis, as a direct supplement to the cognitive instruction learned in the classroom whereas FFA contests may include participation in activities quite apart from those being taught at any particular time such as public speaking, parliamentary procedure or building our American communities; and (c) The SOE experience is pointed toward successful completion of a project whereas the FFA experience is pointed toward motivating students to excell in all aspects of the instructional program at the local, State, and/or national level. To qualify for an FFA Agriculture Proficiency Award, a member must, as an initial step, produce evidence that he/she has engaged in an outstanding SOE program thus further tying the FFA and the SOE experiences together.

While the teacher of vocational agriculture is typically expected to sponsor a local FFA chapter, there is no automatic requirement that he/she do so. There are approximately 150 programs of vocational agriculture instruction in existence that have no FFA chapter associated with them. Seminar participants reported that, in such instances, students were often seen as less interested in their vocational agriculture program than were students where FFA was an integral part of the total instructional program. At the other extreme, participants reported that there are some vocational agriculture programs in existence where the teacher spends so much time on FFA contest activities, other parts of the total instructional program suffer. When properly done, FFA is best seen as one of the major kinds of responsibilities assumed by the teacher of vocational agriculture. It is one of many student organizations operated under the direct sponsorship of professional educators. In the case of vocational student organizations, such as FFA and the others named earlier in this monograph, the teacher receives a great deal of direct assistance in making his/her club operate more effectively through help provided by vocational education supervisory personnel at the State department of education level as well as from its national headquarters operations.

Differences Between FFA and 4-H Operations

Another monograph in the series on collaboration has been devoted to 4-H AND CAREER EDUCATION. Readers are urged to study that monograph, as well as this one, together in order to have clearly in mind the basic and essential differences between FFA and 4-H. In this seminar, the participants, each of whom came from the field of agricultural education, presented their perceptions of the essential differences. Some of these perceptions are reported here.

First, they pointed out that, while 70 percent of 4-H members are under 12 years of age, the *youngest* FFA member is 14 and membership goes up to 21 years of age. While, as pointed out in the 4-H monograph, some 4-H activities are conducted for students at the secondary school age level. For many former 4-H members, FFA becomes the group to which they graduate after having been in 4-H for a number of years. Many youth belong both to 4-H and FFA. They become junior leaders in the 4-H program, thus having an opportunity to share their knowledge with younger 4-H members. In this sense, FFA and 4-H are complimentary but certainly not competitive activities. Participants pointed out that there is a competitive flavor in some local communities, but this is

not desired by either FFA or by 4-H. As a matter of fact, close cooperation is often seen, for example, that one can often find 4-H and FFA holding their contests on the same day in the same location using the same judges. Whether this kind of ideal cooperation exists at the local level depends on both the 4-H youth specialist and on the teacher of vocational agriculture.

Second, the 4-H program operates, as part of the Extension Service, under provisions of the Smith-Lever Act as an out-of-school program for youth. FFA, on the other hand, operates as part of the regular school program under provisions of the Smith-Hughes and subsequent Vocational Education Acts. In this sense, 4-H depends on voluntary leadership from community members to make its club efforts successful whereas FFA depends on leadership from instructors of vocational agriculture employed by local school systems.

Third, participants in this seminar viewed the prime purpose of FFA as being concentrated on *leadership*, citizenship and career development whereas they viewed the prime purpose of 4-H as concentrating much more on a total *human* development including leadership. Individual projects are highlighted in 4-H goals whereas placement and advancement in agriculture and related agriculturally occupations are highlighted in FFA operations.

In 4-H, the members learn as they strive to complete a project whereas, in FFA, the project is seen as a part of the broader instructional process. The approach is a "doing-to-learn" one where the 4-H approach is a "learning by doing" one.

These participants, representing FFA, were very supportive of and complimentary in the remarks they made concerning the 4-H Club operation. This same kind of mutual respect and a sincere desire to support each other had been evidenced earlier in the seminar involving 4-H Club experts. It seems obvious that those educators who are, for any reason, inclined to want to choose only one of these two groups with whom to work would find support from neither FFA or from 4-H for such an approach. Both FFA and 4-H are very valuable and important youth clubs, but they were established for basically different reasons and operate in ways that essentially serve different persons at any given point in time.

The National FFA Center and Career Education

To understand and appreciate the current involvement of FFA in career education, it is first necessary to view career education activities representing leadership efforts of the National FFA Center referred to earlier. There are six such activities that deserve mention here.

First, the Center publishes a magazine for FFA members entitled NATIONAL FUTURE FARMER. This magazine is mailed directly to the home of every member from the Center. Almost without exception, each issue of this publication contains one or more articles related to agricultural careers. As a result, each member is exposed to career information on a regular basis.

Second, the entire FFA Proficiency Awards system has built into it an emphasis on career exploration for participants. In order to successfully compete in this whole contest system, it is essential that each member spend some time in preparing career related materials related to his/her project. Thus, a "careers" emphasis is a built-in part of this entire system.

Third, FFA has produced the FOOD FOR AMERICA program for use in elementary schools as basically a career awareness project. It is carried out in two primary ways. One way is through distribution to each of the current 8,500 FFA chapters of materials that will allow their members to take this program to elementary schools in their geographic area. The materials themselves include: (a) a film; (b) a set of ditto masters for use in the classroom; (c) a suggested presentation outline for the member to use in the elementary school classroom; (d) a suggested set of procedures for use in taking elementary school pupils on field trips aimed at increasing their awareness of agricultural and agricultural-related occupations; and (e) a suggested set of procedures for using persons employed in agriculture and in agricultural-related occupations to serve as resource persons for career awareness in the elementary school.

The alternative method for distribution of the FOOD FOR AMERICA program consists of a mailing from the National FFA Center to every elementary school in the nation offering to make these materials available to elementary schools not served by a local FFA chapter.

Fourth, the Center makes available a publication entitled CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES prepared by the College of Agriculture at Washington State University. This is a very comprehensive publication giving both a broad perspective of careers in agriculture and natural resources along with a long list of specific occupations included in this area. This publication is distributed upon requests by career education persons and school counselors.

Fifth, the FFA has published the STUDENT HANDBOOK which is available, at nominal charge, to all agriculture/agribusiness students. Included in this publication are large sections on agriculturally-related careers for each of the 22 major areas in which FFA proficiency awards and contests are held. The "careers" emphasis is a major part of this publication.

Sixth, since 1966, the National FFA staff has included, as an integral part of the National FFA Convention, the NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CAREERS SHOW. This separate exhibit is aimed at acquainting FFA members, their vocational agriculture teachers, and their sponsors attending the convention with a wide variety of information and exhibits of careers related to agriculture. While limited in the past to about 50 exhibits, this show included in 1978 over 200 separate exhibits including those from businesses and industries supporting the National FFA Foundation. It has proven to be a very popular part of the National FFA Convention and has stimulated an even greater "careers" emphasis in local FFA chapters throughout the nation.

Career Education Responsibilities of the Teacher of Vocational Agriculture

Because FFA operates as an in-school curriculum program, it is seen as part of the total job responsibility of the vocational agriculture teacher. These seminar participants spent considerable time discussing the general topic of career education as it applies to the total job of the vocational agriculture teacher. Their thoughts on this subject are reported here, in part, to put FFA in proper perspective to this broader career education effort. In part, this discussion is included because of the implications it holds for applicability to teachers in other areas of vocational education who also have youth clubs to sponsor as part of their responsibilities.

First, some specific examples of career education activities should be mentioned. In Cashmere, Washington, Jim Cockle has incorporated a number of career education goals into both his regular instructional goals and into his goals for FFA chapter work. For example, if, in vocational agriculture, the instructional goal is, say, to learn to make a particular kind of weld, Jim added to this a career education goal of showing students various kinds of careers in which welding is used. In the case of FFA contest work, Jim has found that if, for example, he is conducting a meat judging contest, he can infuse career education goals of showing his students not only a variety of careers related to the meat industry but also something of the basic economic understandings related to the supply and demand for various kinds of meat.

In Gainesville, Florida, Ed Thompson has been given responsibility for teaching a vocational agriculture orientation/exploration unit to 7th and 8th-graders as part of a career exploration "wheel" involving the several areas of vocational education. His responsibilities, with these 7th and 8th-graders, is not at all directly concerned with providing them with vocational skills in agriculture. Instead, his prime mission is to help students become aware of and explore their possible interests in a wide variety of careers in agriculture and agriculturally-related occupations.

In Ohio, through the leadership efforts of Mr. Jim Dougan in the Ohio State Department of Education, a series of curricular guides have been developed and given to local teachers of vocational agriculture. These guides are intended to be used by vocational agriculture–FFA members in career awareness activities in elementary schools as a special kind of project.

Teachers of vocational agriculture are encouraged by their national professional association–the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association (NVATA) to actively incorporate career education activities into their regular instructional program. This is done on a "contest" basis with an annual "winner" for each State, six regional "winners" picked from these State winners, and, finally, one teacher of vocational agriculture being awarded each year the CAREER ORIENTATION AWARD of the NVATA. If the NVATA were to publish the complete list of activities and career education projects submitted as part of this national contest, there would be available an amazing set of career education practices.

One of the newer kinds of career education practices in which many teachers of vocational agriculture now find themselves involved is that carried out by the Alumni Associations. The Alumni Association was started by the National FFA Board of Directors in 1972 and now has a total of 12,000 active members. In the State of Washington, the Association has assembled a traveling van that depicts the major kinds of agriculture found in that State along with many pictures of vocational agriculture FFA projects now being conducted in each district of the State. This traveling van goes mostly to such things as county fairs, livestock shows, etc. around the State but has, on occasion, been used for career awareness purposes in elementary schools. In Owatonna, Minnesota, Don Barber, the local vocational agriculture teacher, reports that his FFA Alumni Association has, on occasion, offered to take its members, on a one to one basis, with them to their place of business for a day as a shadowing experience. In Connecticut, Al Mannebach reported that the FFA Alumni Association participates in "Ag Careers Night" where, each year, several hundred youth learn about careers in agriculture. Other participants reported using members of their local Alumni Association as chaperones when FFA members go on career exploration field trips.

In addition to these kinds of specific examples, seminar participants developed a series of general statements concerning the roles and responsibilities of the vocational agriculture teacher in career education. While not all participants agreed with each of these generalizations, there appeared to be a general concensus on each. Because the generalizations developed by these participants hold very basic and very serious implications for all teachers of vocational education, they are listed here in as specific fashion as possible.

1. The prime responsibility of the teacher of vocational agriculture lies in providing students with specific entry-level skills in agriculture and in agriculturally-related occupations. This is both the most important and the most time-consuming part of his/her job.

2. It is becoming increasingly obvious that many students in vocational agriculture are: (a) enrolled more for purposes of career exploration than for purposes of specific job skill preparation; and/or (b) pursue eventual careers outside the field of agriculture or agriculturally-related occupations. It is equally obvious that, even for students who seek specific

entry-level skills and who will, in fact, enter and remain in agriculture or in an occupation directly related to agriculture, employers of such students expect them to possess a variety of kinds of interpersonal and adaptability skills over and beyond the specific entry-level vocational skills of vocational agriculture. Thus, career education is seen as a key and critical part of the total role and function of the vocational agriculture teacher.

3. Teachers of vocational agriculture are charged with imparting the following kinds of career education skills to each student over and beyond the specific job-entry skills of vocational agriculture: (a) good work habits; (b) a personally meaningful set of work values; (c) career decisionmaking skills related to total lifestyle; (d) basic economic understandings of the private enterprise system; (e) job-seeking, job-getting, job-holding skills; (f) skills in discovering educational/occupational opportunities consistent with their interests and aptitudes; (g) skills in finding various forms of unpaid work for use in the productive use of leisure time; and (h) skills useful in combatting stereotyping as this acts to restrict full freedom of educational and occupational choice. *The teaching of such career education skills is, and has been, an integral part of the total job of the vocational agriculture teacher.*

4. Teachers of vocational agriculture are more properly evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they provide students with employability skills—including both vocational education and career education skills—than in terms of whether or not their graduates find employment in agriculture or in an occupation directly related to agriculture.

5. Teachers of vocational agriculture, through the vehicle of the FFA and its Alumni Association, have responsibilities for encouraging and for participating in career awareness activities at the elementary school level and in career exploration activities at the junior high school level. Through such activities, as well as in the teaching of vocational agriculture, the teacher of vocational agriculture should express, through action, a commitment of helping avoid premature occupational choices on the part of students.

6. Teachers of vocational agriculture have a unique and serious responsibility for making their students, as well as other

students, aware of careers in agriculture and in occupations related to agriculture. The teacher of vocational agriculture, if he/she does this task the way it should be done, will not find time to provide equally detailed information to students about careers in other occupational areas. Teachers whose interests lie in other areas must accept that responsibility. Whether or not they do so does not excuse the teacher of vocational agriculture from accepting this responsibility.

7. Teachers of vocational agriculture have a responsibility for contributing help to students learning basic academic skills which are required in agricultural occupations and in occupations related to agriculture. Many such skills are taught naturally as a part of the FFA experience.

8. Teachers of vocational agriculture need to retain their primary professional identity with the broad field of vocational education as a major instructional area of education. Because they are teachers with specific classes to teach, they cannot—and should not—place their primary emphasis on the career education concept. *All* teachers—including teachers of vocational agriculture—need to incorporate career education into their instructional programs. It is important for teachers of vocational agriculture to remember that their primary area of instruction is vocational education.

The generalizations noted above are ones that all other teachers of vocational education will hopefully examine and consider. In formulating these statements, participants emphasized that, even among teachers of vocational agriculture, it is doubtful if, at present, a large majority would agree with all of them. However, they felt these statements represent a desirable direction in which to head for all teachers of vocational education.

Participants emphasized that, while this set of general statements applies to the total job of the vocational agriculture teacher, it has particular relevance to that part of the job dealing with FFA activities. They saw the Organization as a *true* career education enterprise. My personal feelings are in high agreement.

Preparing Vocational Agriculture Teachers to Participate in Career Education

If teachers of vocational agriculture are to be expected to engage in career education as part of their total responsibilities, how are they being prepared to fill such roles? In providing some specific examples of answers to this question, participants also offered a great many insights regarding activities of teacher education institutions to prepare teachers of vocational agriculture to fulfill their responsibilities as their leaders. Both the topic of FFA and the topic of career education are, apparently, included as part of teacher preparation—at least in the institutions from which these seminar participants came.

At Colorado State University, prospective teachers of vocational agriculture are exposed to career education both in the "Introduction to Vocational Agriculture" course and in the methods courses in vocational agriculture. Teachers of such methods courses have been given an inservice education experience in career education. Unfortunately, it appears not to have "taken" with all of them. As a result, they are considering teaching a special course in 'career education" and requiring it of all students majoring in all areas of vocational education.

At Louisiana State University, prospective teachers of vocational agriculture are required to study career development theory as part of their program. In addition, they are required to spend a minimum of 30 hours in a work experience project in some agriculture-related business and to write job descriptions for each agriculturally-related occupation they find. This is a part of their work in the junior year.

At the University of Florida a discussion of career education is a part of the course entitled "Philosophy of Vocational Education." In addition, as an elective course, students are given an opportunity to enroll in a course entitled "Career Education in Agricultural Occupations." This course was inserted because, in Florida, it had become increasingly popular to ask vocational agriculture teachers to teach career exploration in vocational agriculture at the 7th and 8th grade levels. Some vocational agriculture teachers in Florida now do so on a full-time basis and have been removed from the senior high school setting. Finally, at the University of Florida, some prospective teachers of vocational agriculture engage in various forms of work experience in business/industry settings related to agriculture.

At the University of Nebraska, prospective teachers of vocational agriculture are exposed to a number of career education units and career education related activities as a planned part of the standard four-year curriculum. The career education curriculum guides in use are ones that were built by practicing vocational agriculture teachers with help from personnel in the Nebraska State Department of Education.

Iowa State University is seriously considering a massive career education effort extending across the entire campus under which members of the teaching faculty will be released, in some planned and orderly way, for purposes of spending up to one year to study and to gain some actual experience in the occupational society. Assignments of faculty members, under this plan, will be made in those parts of the occupational society where their graduates have, in the past, most often found employment. The Iowa State plan would include, but is not limited to, faculty members who are responsible for teaching agricultural education courses.

These participants did not discuss specifically how prospective teachers of vocational agriculture are prepared to work in FFA activities. It would appear that, with this emphasis on career education, it would be both easy and natural to incorporate a great many suggestions for serving as an effective FFA leader within the period of time devoted to helping students understand career education.

Re-establishing Effective Vocational Education/Career Education Relationships: Participant Thoughts

Near the end of the seminar, participants spent some time discussing the general problem of bringing the vocational education and career education movements back together in the same kind of close working relationship they enjoyed when the career education movement began in 1971. Their thoughts on this subject are worthy of study and reflection on the part of all educators interested in career education.

First, they pointed out that, in the beginning, vocational education was career education's greatest supporter. At that period in time, vocational educators felt they were already doing career education and saw their primary mission as being one of motivating teachers of the so-called "academic" subjects to infuse a career education emphasis into their teaching. When so many academic

teachers did so quickly, some vocational educators assumed that their mission as a career education "crusader" had been completed.

Second, some vocational educators apparently became threatened when they saw many non-vocational education teachers begin to engage in career education and proclaim that they, too, are preparing students for work. To some vocational educators, "preparing students for work" was the sole job of the vocational educator. When they saw that "career education" did not belong simply to them, they began to back away.

Third, part of the philosophy of vocational education has been to separate from the rest of education. When career education came along and tried to, in effect, integrate vocational education with academic education, some vocational educators were threatened and resisted.

Fourth, as the career education movement has expanded, some vocational educators saw it as holding the potential danger of both draining funds from vocational education and, equally important, draining some of the resources of the business/labor/industry community which, for many years, vocational educators assumed "belonged" to them. Part of the resistance among vocational educators to career education in recent years has, these participants felt, been due to this.

Finally, there exist, among some vocational educators, a general fear that career education is trying to "take over" vocational education. They resist being thought of as only a "part" of career education.

These participants felt that none of these fears were justified. Rather, they pointed out that teachers tend to distinguish one from another faculty member primarily by identifying the subject matter discipline with which that teacher is associated. Each "kind" of teacher has a distinct body of knowledge to deliver to students. On the other hand, career education is not a "subject" to be added to others now existing, but rather a set of concepts and skills to be infused among all subjects. Thus, because vocational education contributes to career education goals and objectives in no way means it is a "part" of career education. It simply means that vocational education teachers, like all other teachers, are being asked to assume some responsibility for implementing an effective career education effort. Because "career education" has been

perceived by vocational educators to be an integral part of their job responsibilities for many years is no reason to think of "career education" as including "vocational education" in its meaning—anymore than "career education" includes "English" in its meaning.

These participants felt strongly that vocational educators should emphasize and further strengthen their interest and actions in career education. As a matter of fact, they saw no way the total career education effort can succeed unless this happens. Speaking only for themselves, they saw the career education movement as an opportunity for vocational educators to play an even more important role in education. They did not see it as a threat to vocational education. The distinction they made between "vocational educators" and "vocational education" is most important here.

Personal Observations

As I listened to these participants for two full days, it was obvious to me that they had great difficulty talking about the topic of "FFA and Career Education" independent of the topic of "Vocational Agriculture Teachers and Career Education." I have tried here to record all of the major topics these participants selected for discussion. Readers will, no doubt, receive an impression that this monograph could have certainly been given a different and a more appropriate title.

In spite of this, their discussion of the Student Organization was extremely helpful and productive for me. As I listened to participants and studied the literature they gave me, it seemed increasingly obvious to me that FFA really *can* be called "career education" in a very real way. Its emphasis on leadership, on career exploration, on development of good work habits, work values, and basic economic understanding, combine to lead me to this conclusion. Youth who participate in FFA work certainly have had a "career education experience."

One of the most interesting insights I received from these participants was in learning how intimately FFA is tied to the total job of the vocational agriculture teacher. The emphasis on character building and leadership through competitive activities appears to be a much needed and a most effective supplement to both the didactic instruction and the supervised occupational experience given to students in vocational agriculture. As a career

education kind of activity, FFA stands as a fine example of how a career education effort can—and does—motivate students to learn more subject matter. It seems obvious to me that FFA provides students both with a pride in the field of vocational agriculture and with pride and confidence in themselves.

It seems further obvious that FFA derives its strength and vitality from a number of sources including: (a) the FFA Foundation funded by the private enterprise system; (b) the professional leadership and services supplied by the National FFA Center; (c) the obvious dedication of agricultural education departments in our land grant colleges and universities to the goals and objectives of FFA; (d) the potential FFA holds for making teaching more meaningful to the teacher and learning more meaningful for the student; and (e) the effective ways FFA has found to combine in-school resources with the resources of the broader community. The FFA "formula" is one that those interested in career education should study carefully. It has many possibilities for application.

Readers of this monograph have hopefully become aware that, while FFA and other vocational education youth organizations are referred to as "in school" clubs, much of the club activity and many of the resources available to the participating students are found in the broader community environment outside the walls of the school itself. They are properly labeled as "in school" clubs primarily in that they are typically led by professional educators who regard the club activity as an essential part of the total learning process—and so of the teacher's job. In almost every other respect, these vocational education student groups bear great resemblance to other kinds of youth groups sponsored by segments of the community outside of the formal education system. The "bridge" between the education system and the broader community seems to have been effectively built through establishment of FFA and other vocational education student youth clubs.

Prior to this opportunity to learn from these seminar participants, I had been under a clear impression that FFA must surely emphasize careers related to agriculture at the expense of helping its members consider other occupational alternatives. After listening and learning for two days, I am now convinced that, while I was partly right in this assumption, I was also partly wrong. As I think about it now, it seems logical to me that teachers of vocational agriculture can best serve the students who elect to come to them through focusing their primary attention on agricultural careers and

careers related to agriculture. The FFA approach encourages this but only with a corresponding emphasis on the career exploration process itself. If, in the FFA experience, a student decides that she/he is not interested in a career related to agriculture, the qualities of leadership, successful accomplishment, development of good work habits, development of personally meaningful work values, and similar other valuable outcomes of FFA will be of benefit to that student no matter what occupational area is finally chosen.

In short, FFA and the other vocational education student organizations that exist seem, to me, to have obviously great potential for helping to implement an effective career education effort. Any school system that purports to be engaging in career education should do its very best to include FFA and the other vocational education student organizations as an integral and important part of the career education effort. In doing so, credit can—and should—be given to vocational agriculture and to teachers of vocational agriculture without, in any way, trying to "take over" vocational education.

This brings me to one final observation; namely, a short comment on the remarks of these participants regarding relationships between vocational education and career education. I find nothing strange or uncomfortable about acknowledging that vocational agriculture teachers—as well as other kinds of vocational education teachers—were engaged in the career education effort long before the term "career education" was invented. So long as "career education" remains a conceptual effort to be carried out by all educators and by a wide variety of persons in the broader community, we can continue to credit each for contributing to that effort with no need to "take them over." As a matter of fact, if we did try to assume all "career education" activities under a single *program* called "career education," the total effort would surely fail. Let each get as much credit as it deserves for the effective implementation of career education. When such credit is passed out, it seems evident to me that a significant portion of it will surely be given to FFA and to other vocational education student organizations. That is as it should be.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Issues Raised by Participants

1. How can FFA best contribute to career exploration?
2. Who's responsible for career education?
3. How can FFA help youth deal with change?
4. How do the FFA achievement programs contribute to career education?
5. How ready are FFA instructors to contribute to career education?
6. How can individual differences in FFA students influence FFA career education activities?
7. Is it better to do career education as a supplemental unit or as an integral part of the curriculum?
8. How can FFA cognitive activities be balanced with career exploration in agriculture for 7th and 8th graders?
9. How much career education should be done at the 7th and 8th grade levels in vocational agriculture?
10. How can vocational agriculture teachers best fit into a K-high school career education effort?
11. How can FFA members best help K-6 teachers in career education?
12. How can career education best be infused into vocational agriculture teacher preparation programs?
13. What are the implications of a comprehensive K-8 career education effort for change in vocational agriculture senior high school and postsecondary offerings?
14. How can we get vocational agriculture teachers more involved in asking for and using resources from the business/labor/industry community?
15. How can we develop a spirit of inquiry within FFA students?
16. What parts of FFA are legitimately "career education?"

17. Is it better to use a "method and materials," a "concept sell," or a "program" route for putting career education schools?

18. How can FFA current materials and activities best be revised to make them even more effective in career education?

19. How can career education be made something different from a new "add on" program in education?

20. How can vocational agriculture teachers be helped to clearly see the differences between career education and vocational education?

21. How can FFA goals and activities be coordinated with curriculum goals and with career education goals?

22. How can FFA best contribute to student self development and self concepts of students?

23. How can we get more career education inservice education for vocational agriculture teachers? What kinds of inservice education do vocational agriculture teachers need?

24. How can school budgets be revised to reflect a career education emphasis?

25. How can curriculum articulation be done in vocational agriculture so that students have more balanced experiences?

26. How can we get more vocational agriculture teachers involved in career education to broaden career exposure for all students?

27. How can FFA be more involved in career education with no more funds?

28. How can competition between the SEA career education officers and the SEA vocational agriculture officers be reduced?

29. How can realistic career exploration experiences be made more available in small communities?

30. How can we measure whether or not an FFA advisory is doing his career education job?

31. How can vocational agriculture teachers best work with industrial arts, home economics, and business education teachers in a coordinated career exploration program at the 9th and 10th grades?

32. How can vocational education funds be justified for career exploration if senior high vocational education enrollments are going down?

33. How can FFA alumni groups be used for career education?

34. How do FFA advisors best communicate with the business/labor/industry community?

35. How do we keep the good vocational agriculture teachers in education?

36. How can new vocational agriculture teachers who have themselves never been in FFA learn how to run FFA chapters?

37. How can vocational agriculture teachers and special education teachers work together to provide career education for special education students?

38. How can FFA activities best be coordinated with other career education efforts so that duplication can be avoided?

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